

# The Washington Times

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MONDAY, APRIL 28, 1919.

## Browning and the Stenographer

Whose Poetry (?) Do You Like the Better?

Spring is the time for poetry. Somehow, while other things are bursting forth—leaves, early flowers, and new fashions—the human heart strains at the boundaries of prose and breaks into verse.

It usually is a sad time for those who write and those who read. The authors feel that they are not appreciated. The readers are certain that they are imposed upon.

There is very little good poetry.

Once in a while a vagrant verse is written, like "In Flanders Fields," that attracts wide attention and gains great popularity.

But, says the literary expert, "popularity doesn't make poetry."

What is poetry?

Watts-Dunton, the great English authority on verse, the friend of Tennyson, Swinburne, and Rossetti, says it is the concrete and artistic expression of the human mind in emotional and rhythmical language. Like most technical definitions, that doesn't satisfy any but the technical mind.

On the chance that the office boy would have a better explanation, for office boys are keener of intellect than their job implies, we asked him. His answer was: "It's the stuff where every line begins with a capital letter, and it sounds good when you read it."

"Example is better than precept," so we print below two poems and ask you to decide if either or both of these are true verse or if neither measures up to what you think poetry should be.

One of them, "Evelyn Hope," was written by Robert Browning, hailed as one of the greatest of English writers of verse. The other, "The Old Maid," was written and sent to this newspaper by a hard-working stenographer, who doesn't let poetry writing interfere with her regular work, but who says, "I get the keenest enjoyment of my life in writing verse."

Here are the two poems; they both concern Death, which, with Love and War, has been the inspiration of almost all the great poems ever written:

EVELYN HOPE.

THE OLD MAID.

By Robert Browning.

By Mary Humphreys.

Beautiful Evelyn Hope is dead!  
Sit and watch by her side an hour.  
That is her bookshelf, this her bed;  
She plucked that piece of geranium flower.

Beginning to die, too, in the glass;  
Little has yet been changed, I think;  
The shutters are shut, no light may pass  
Save two long rays thro' the hinge's chink.

(Sixteen years old when she died!  
Perhaps she had scarcely heard my name;  
It was not her time to love; beside,  
Her life had many a hope and aim.  
Duties honest and little cares,  
And now was quiet, now astir,  
Till God's hand beckoned unawares—  
And the sweet, white brow is all of her.

Is it too late then, Evelyn Hope?  
What, your soul was pure and true?  
The good stars met in your horoscope,  
Made you of spirit, fire, and dew—  
And, just because you were so true,  
And our paths in the world diverged  
So wide,  
Each was naught to each, must I be told?  
We were fellow mortals, naught beside?

I love you, Evelyn, all the while.  
My heart seemed full as it could hold.  
There was place and to spare for the  
frank young smile.

And the red young mouth, and the  
affair's young eyes,  
So, hush—I will give you this leaf to keep;  
Sec, I shut it inside the sweet cold hand!

There, that is our secret; go to sleep!  
You will wake, and remember, and understand.

Which do you like the better, the work of Browning or the stenographer?

## SUBSCRIBE!

By LOUIS VARNUM WOULFE.

Subscribe! To the Victory-Liberty loan.

Subscribe! Not because your Government asks it. Subscribe! Because to do so is a practical expression of patriotism.

Subscribe! Because Federal bonds are a guaranteed insurance. They represent protection, freedom and democracy.

Subscribe! As a tribute to the men in "khaki and blue" who gave their today for your tomorrow.

Subscribe! That our soldiers, sailors, and marines may feel that Americans stand behind their chivalry in every contingency.

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Subscribe! That everyone, everywhere, may realize that this Nation pacified, as in war, is united for preserving its traditional ideals.

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Subscribe! That out of the melting pot of national differences may come a fraternal world.

Subscribe! That the honor of the United States and the rights of humanity may be forever respected.

Subscribe! That Liberty may live, develop, spread everywhere; that peace may stand unchallenged; that America—your land and my land—may take her merited place in the Council of Nations.

The responsibility is yours. Your example, your contribution, your investment, will be an index of the value you place upon what America has done for your personal welfare.

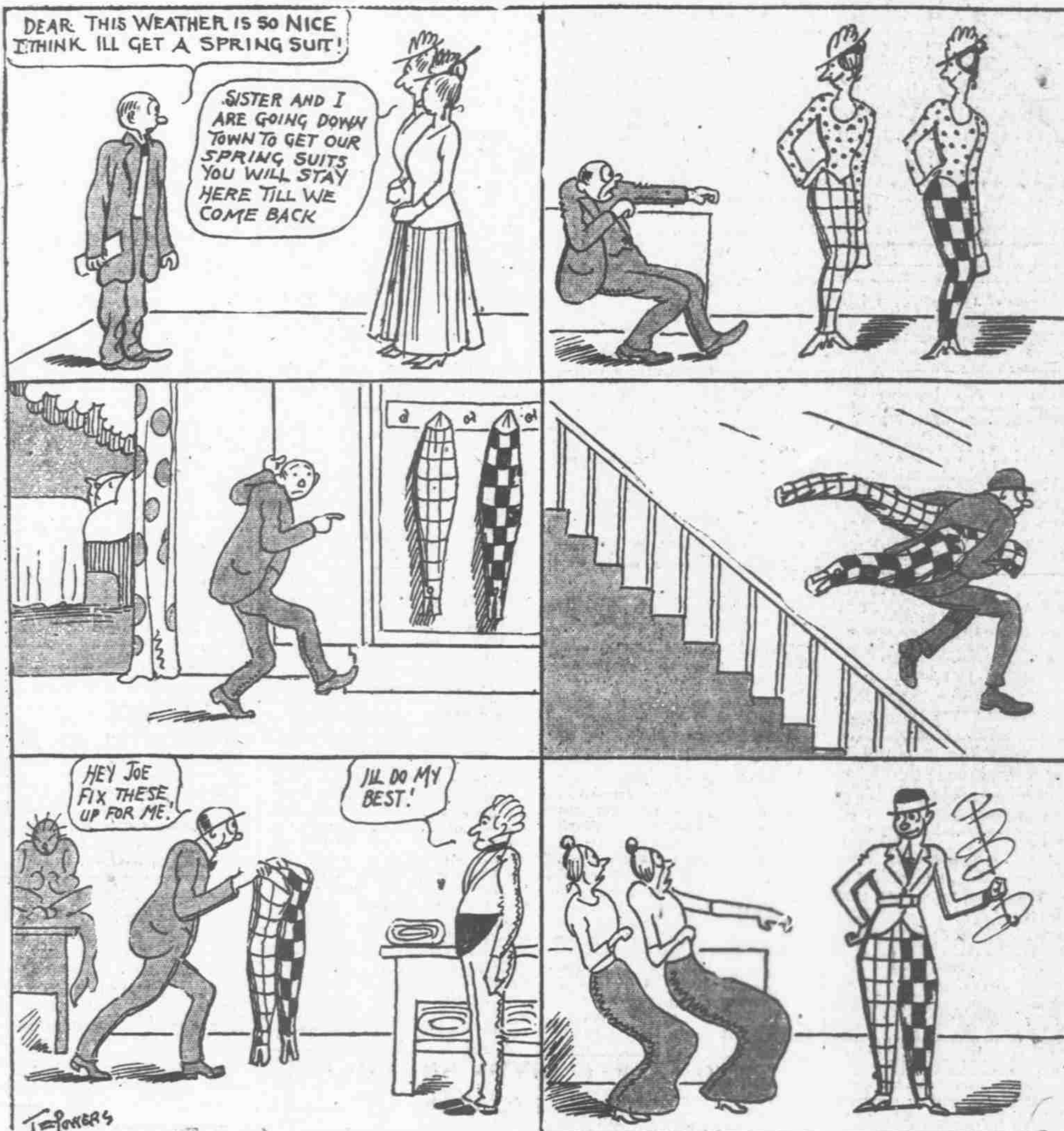
The debt is yours. What will you sacrifice to discharge this master obligation. What will you lend to the greatest Government, of the greatest people, of the greatest nation in the world?

I answer—a subscription. May my faith in your patriotism and Americanism be sustained.

## The League of Husbands

Two Hobbies Equal One Pair of What-You-Call'em

By T. E. Powers



## Beatrice Fairfax Writes of the Problems and Pitfalls of the War Workers Especially for Washington Women

TODAY'S TOPIC  
BACHELORS AGAIN "LOCK HORNS."

READERS of this column have greatly enjoyed the "scraping" of two male bachelors, neither of whom has committed himself to the necessary number of "I wills," which convert the most didactic of bachelors into the gentlest and most thoroughly broken of married men—"safe for lady to drive."

Out of the fullness of their inexperience have they spoken: the "Bachelor" thinks the trouble with girls who do not attract men is that they show too plainly how much they care. The Walter Reed boy who has taken up the cudgels for the girls, berates the "Bachelor" for telling the number of girls who have proposed to him. "N. C. O.'s" letter, which is signed "Lame Guy," is as follows:

"Why Devote So Much Space To His Conquests?"

My dear Miss Fairfax:

While it is rather hard to reply to one who cannot stick to the point long enough to furnish an argument, I am going to do my best, in my "pedantic" fashion, to answer old boy "Bachelor."

If he is trying to appear sarcastic, why stoop to such a pitifully weak weapon with which to discredit his adversary, if such he wishes to regard the writer? (By the way, "N. C. O." while it does not officially mean "not carried over," may, I am glad to say, be so interpreted. Some of us did not have to be "carried" over. We went.)

To go on: "If he wants to deny that he is a 'heart-breaker,' why devote so much space to his conquests? Oh, we believe you, all right, Bach. You doubtless have got 'em in Memphis, Nashville—seem to be playing the Ridge-Runners pretty strong; did they run you out of the forty-four States, or are the girls in West Tennessee not as sensible as they are in other parts? I hate to believe it. I've lived in Tennessee, I repeat, we believe you, but why advertise it. No white man brags of the way he throws 'em over after hypnotizing 'em."

And, speaking of advertising, why advertise one's love for one's mother? One may as well pride himself on breathing air, or eating food. In my opinion—which I admit is SOME opinion—love for one's mother is just a little too sacred a subject for public discussion, and the greater it is, the more sacred it should be. So the Bachelor believes that no

one loves his mother any the less because of that other love. Rather, there is completed another "eternal triangle," which is too often ridiculed: the mother, the woman, and the man; the mother first, because she is the mother; the woman before the man, because the opposite view was more or less gyped during the little undertaking which closed last November, and the man last, because the other two are so far ahead of him. And there, friend Bachelor, you have a combination that comprises all that a man has to live for.

In closing, let me remind the Bachelor that, while Kipling is justly famed for his assertion that—

"Down to Gehenna, or up to the Throne,  
He travels the fastest who travels alone."

he deserves even more credit when he made the "Lords of their hands" say:

"Until we are made like angels,  
with hammer and chisel and pen,  
We will work for ourselves and a Woman, forever and ever, amen."

I am not an angel. Are you, Bachelor? LAME GUY.

Several girls have contributed to the scrap by expressing their opinion that the belligerent "Bachelor" lost every vestige of popularity when he confided the bafe effect his "fatal gift" had on those Tennessee and Texas girls who proposed to him. One young lady says: "His excellent mother failed in one particular, at least, she spared her slipper and brought up a tattler." But we are not going to give all of her letter, there are rules to be observed even in the ring and the use of hatpins is debarré. A gentler rebuke is:

Think as Much of One as Another.  
DEAR MISS FAIRFAX:

To my great disgust, and disappointment, the marriage question is becoming alarming. Most girls of today continually crave good times, which in their opinion consist of risk-taking, cigarette smoking, drinking, and rag-time parties.

Now I am not opposed to enjoyment when it is on a sane and reputable footing. My point is this: There are many young men of good morals desirous of good wives, yet afraid of the modern young woman, whose ideas of marriage are not based on love but mostly on a financial standpoint.

They seem to think as much of one man as they do of another, even after marriage. Most girls are enemies to domestic work and regard a husband as a means of evading such sordid employment. I know all girls are not like this, but the majority of them are. I see great misfortune befall young girls every day owing to ignorance, lack of restriction on the part of parents and courted temptation. How can girls demand respect when, apparently, they have none for themselves. They present themselves in public scantily dressed and seem to delight in the use of profane language. I believe much of the trouble lies with modern parents who, instead of leading the children, are led by them. And the modern vulgarity goes far to ruin young women. What will become of future generations?

The only suggestion I have to offer this correspondent as a remedy for his pessimism is the next time he has an idle half hour or so on his hands to belate himself to a public library and look over some of the old Latin authors who worried over future generations before the dawn of the Christian era. The pendulum swings so far, and then it has to swing back again. There is considerable evidence, on hand at present, to show that the swing back to normality has already begun. The great spiritual and religious awakening in the allied countries of Europe for one thing. And as for the type of girl he speaks of, they, like the poor, are always with us. They are the unfortunate files of our so-called civilization who fall on the fly-paper, alas!

## Live Topics

Cheaper Milk—Clubhouse or Jail—Street Cars for Potomac Park.

By EARL GODWIN:

DR. FOWLER, the Health Officer, is to be commended and congratulated if he can bring down the price of milk. If, as the news from the District Building indicates, the price will be at 14 cents a quart or LOWER, Dr. Fowler will have accomplished something for which he deserves a place in the hall of District of Columbia fame.

The public generally does not understand the many problems confronting the milkman. All the public knows is that the price of milk goes UP. The Health Officer, assailed on all sides by men who have a pocketbook interest in milk—and nothing else—is in a position to see all sides of the milk business, from the farmer all the way through to the man who leaves the milk bottles at your house. Washington has heard long enough that "you can't have cheap milk as long as there are strict Health Officer regulations." I believe that we can and will have good, clean milk at lower prices than we are now paying, but it will take a vigilant public official who KNOWS the milk situation to insure this to the public.

I have been disappointed because Dr. Louis Zinkhan, former Superintendent of the Jail, has not issued any statement nor given the public his side of the ugly situation at the jail. As the matter stands now the old and well-known administration of the jail is under serious charges and the public is getting a one-sided impression.

Jails are built for one purpose—to keep prisoners. When prisoners escape en masse, as occurred a few months ago, the community is shocked. But when it is charged that prisoners under charge of murder are allowed to walk out of the jail and attend festivities "because the party would not be complete without him," we might as well have no jail at all.

I am glad to see that a part of the Beeler belt line project is receiving the careful consideration of the Public Utilities Commission. The project now under scrutiny, if carried to a conclusion, would make Potomac Park easier of access and would be of benefit to the thousands of Government clerks in the new War and Navy Department buildings.

Potomac Park has always been too far away from the great mass of the public. For thousands of people it is almost too much of a journey. It was designed for a PUBLIC benefaction, and in truth it is one of the greatest blessings any city could have, but to make it COMPLETE it needs service from a car line which taps all sections of the city.

## HEARD AND SEEN

F. S. WHITEHOUSE, 917 New York avenue, has a suggestion for the name of the club of Washingtonians who are going to see that wounded soldiers are not permitted to stand up in street cars.

Mr. Whitehouse calls it the "LEST WE FORGET" club.

"Why not," he suggests, "request the conductors instead of calling 'wounded soldiers' to sing out this kind of a general alarm or put a card marked 'Lest We Forget' in large type where all the passengers can see it?"

Here's a Little Girl Who Matches Robert Ashford's quarter and raises him two bits. Now who'll come along with Loretta and give me a dollar!

"I saw in your columns where a little boy, eight years old, sent you 25 cents he had earned to help buy smokes for soldiers. He wants some one to match his 25 cents. I have 50 cents that I have earned. I will match his 25 cents and give 25 cents more. Who will match my 50 cents?"

"I was going to buy hair ribbon, but, when I saw your article I changed my mind."

"I think it would be a good idea for you to start a club for the girls and boys who donate money to help buy smokes for sick soldiers."

LORETTA R. BROWN,  
626 F street southwest.

To That Lamp Post Verse:  
I get this from D. B. WINFREY:  
"Shades of Chaplin, Pope, and Dryden! Can you hear their bones rattling, and their spirits tearfully sighing—"

"How could the muse which inspired us to have come to such a fate!"

HILARY OFFUTT says the same man that wrote the Liberty Loan sign in front of the District National Bank wrote all that suspended verse that you see hitched to the lamp posts.

I thought BERT ST. CLAIR wrote it. He used to be a buggy painter.

A carrier pigeon with a hurt wing landed on the roof of the Munsey Building the other day. My office boy, HENRY RICK, ETS, took care of the bird, which had a message tied to one leg. Here's the message:

W...E...L...Y...Y...  
B...E...E...E...S...  
I'll give a prize of two tickets to any theater in Washington to the person who sends the clearest message based on those letters.

Here are some of the ruseses at that message on the carrier pigeon. The cleverest answer gets two tickets to any show in town. Announcement of the winner later.

I take my Corona in hand to essay a clever interpretation of the mystic letters found on the foot of the carrier pigeon by Jimmie Ricketts, 815 York avenue, has a suggestion for the name of the club of Washingtonians who are going to see that wounded soldiers are not permitted to stand up in street cars.

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